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Chapter 6

Place-names around Eccles and their Contribution to understanding the History of the Area

Jillian Hawkins

Introduction

Place-names are an important resource in the understanding of the history of an area. In this part of south-east England they will provide evidence of the process by which this area of Britain, the pre-Roman territory and Roman province, became part of England, the country gradually taken over by incomers from the near continent. This process varied in different parts of the country, and since Kent is close to the continent, changes could have taken place here earlier. The small area of Kent where the Eccles villa was situated would not have been so accessible and easily targeted by newcomers as early as, say, the east coast region, Thanet, the Wantsum Channel and so on. It is not surprising, therefore, that names from the Romano-British period continued, and Old English names appeared later.

Sometimes it is necessary to use some lateral thinking when assessing the evidence of place-names, but imagination must always be tempered with knowledge and fact. It is important to remember that language develops and changes according to the needs, preferences and sometimes the whims, of the people who use it. Spelling will change to reflect pronunciation, which itself changes through time. It is important to avoid making assumptions based on the present form of a name. This was a matter of scathing comment by the late Margaret Gelling (Gelling 1978: 12). In the centuries since a name was first used, many changes to speech and pronunciation will have taken place, or a place with two names will have come to be known by the preferred name. In this area an example of this is Frindsbury, which was also known as Æslingham (BCS 195 AD 764 *...de Æslingham sive Freondsberiam...*). Names may have changed out of all recognition, and the changes may or may not be informative.

A word will have its own meaning or meanings, but it is its significance to the people who used it which influenced its use in naming a place. People named places according to what was significant to them about that place at that time. This could be the name of the landowner, or what activity could be carried out there, or what the soil was like, etc. If there were something different about a certain place, or if a place were perceived to be different in some non-obvious way, this would most probably be reflected in its name. Thus place-names carry not only meaning but also significance. For example, if only one place out of a group of several had a well or a spring, this would probably be reflected in its name. Sometimes the absence from names of what, to us in the 21st century, appears to be important, may not have been important to people of another time, and so may be a factor for investigation. Meanings and significances are not always the same, and both undergo change. Anachronisms must be avoided.

The names of the places in the Eccles area are largely of Old English derivation, as is the case throughout south-east England. It is assumed that any resident British people gradually adopted the new Germanic speech: this would be a cultural change, necessary if the emergent Anglo-Saxon groups were perceived as more powerful, but names of places were often passed on. As will be discussed more fully below, some names survive from Roman times: near the mouth of the Medway Upnor, and Rochester, contain a vestige of their Latin names. If the people using these names had been totally wiped out or had deserted the area, the names would have died with them. Since the names continue, we can assume that some people survived and passed on the name. A continued British existence in the area is suggested by the name of Chatham and Chattenden and certainly a clue to the newcomers' view of the natives survives in the name Wickham. These names indicate that there was some continuation of native Romano-British presence around the mouth of the Medway. The name Eccles is extremely significant, indicating the continuation not only of a name, and so of inhabitants, but also the existence of a Christian community in late Roman times. How long the Christian community continued here is a matter of debate. To date the name is the only indication of Christianity here, but comparison with other sites, especially Lullingstone, some 20km to the west, leads one to believe that this community may have continued to exist, and practise, into the early 5th century, and possibly beyond. The place-names therefore suggest that there was a continuing British or Romano-British presence near the river mouth, and also in the Eccles area.

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Local place-names of significance and their derivation (Figure 6.1)

First, the place-name Eccles will be examined in some detail, then some place-names which appear to be significant in assessing the early history of this area are examined.

Abbreviations

A.S.C. (A) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle A version.
BCS: Birch, W de Gray (1885) *Cartularium Saxonicum*
D.B.: *Domesday Book* 1086.
Brit.: Brittonic, language spoken in Britain before the Romans arrived, and continuing
Corn.: Cornish
H.E.: Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*
M.E.: Middle English
Mod. W.: modern Welsh
O. Celt.: Old Celtic
O. Dan.: Old Danish
O. Fris.: Old Frisian
O.H.G.: Old High German
O. Scand.: Old Scandinavian
O.W.: Old Welsh
Pers. n.: personal name
S.: Sawyer charter number
I.E.: Indo-European, a spoken language deduced by linguists
Pr.W.: Primitive Welsh, spoken by native British, but not written.
O.E.: Old English, the language developed in Britain by incoming Germanic people.

Eccles (TQ 728606)
Ekwall 1922: 37-38; Wallenberg 1931: 305; Wallenberg 1934: 145; Jackson 1953: 227, 265-267, 270, 556-557; Smith 1956: 145; Ekwall 1960: 159; Cameron 1977: 1-7; Gelling 1978: 82-83, 96; Coates and Breeze 2000: 272-273; Watts 2004: 207; Hough 2009: 109-111; James 2009: 126-130.

Roughly 200 years after the Roman villa fell out of use, part of the site was used as a cemetery. There was an associated structure, possibly a shrine/small chapel or part of a domestic settlement, and evidence of later medieval settlement. The continued use of the site explains why the name Eccles survived, although its original meaning had probably been lost.

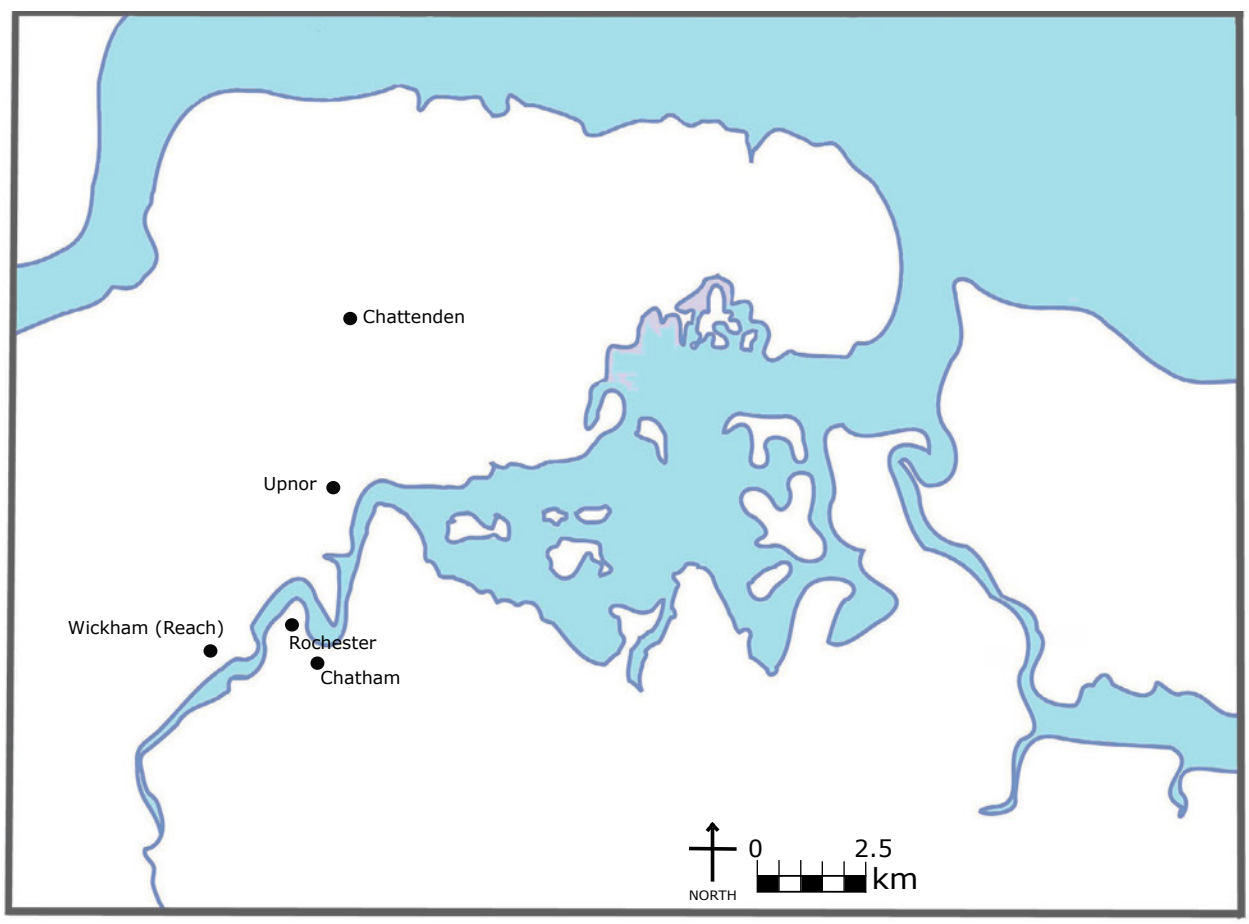

Figure 6.1. Location of pre-Germanic place-names around the mouth of the estuary.

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The first recorded written example of this name in Kent is in the regulations for the repair of the bridge at Rochester, *c*.AD 975, *of* æclesse. In *Domesday Book* it is given as *Aiglessa*, and from 1208 Eccles. Listed as a manor in 1086, Eccles declined in importance, but the name must have continued locally, as on the Fryars estate plan of 1700 'Eccles Field' is marked. On an early Ordnance Survey map (*c.* 1842) Eccles cottages are included, and the newly-created nineteenth-century village was called Eccles, as today.

***The meaning, use and significance of* Eccles**

The original Greek word meant, in ancient Athens, a legislative assembly. It acquired a religious sense in the context of Hellenic Judaism and was used for the congregation in a particular synagogue, then for the Jewish community in general; so originally the word indicated a body or group of people. Later it was adopted by the Christian church, and applied to both a specific local group, and also to the universal Christian church in general: this more abstract usage is typified in Christ's words to Peter:

> 'thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church' (*ecclesia* the English transliteration of Greek *ekklesia*) (Matt. 16, xviii)

Gradually the word began to be applied to the place or building where groups of Christian folk gathered (James 2009: 126).

Thus in British Latin the word probably, and in any case initially, was used to mean the Christian community in the same sense as used by Christ. In late Roman Britain its use implies organised Christian worship by a group of people (Jackson 1953: 227), and this was noted by early Germanic settlers (Gelling 1978: 82), who respected the practice and the word used to designate it (Gelling 1978: 96). Gradually the significance of the word altered, so that rather than referring to the people, it referred to the place where such people met together, or perhaps lived, and thus to a church building. This could form part of an élite household or, where a group of Christians lived apart, a small building. Therefore the notions of place and people came together, a place connected to the Church or owned by it.

In the case of Brittonic **eglēs*, which the Germanic incomers took from the resident British, the word probably signified a place where Christian people lived (Coates and Breeze 2000: 273), and therefore a certain area belonging to such a community. The O.E. adaptation **eclēs* may thus have come to mean 'piece of land called Eccles', in the same way that many rivers were understood by the new people to be called *aþon*. It does not even appear to be an appellative in the same way as *wīchām* was: it was the Germanic folk who created the name *wīchām* for a certain type of place, using Latin *vīcus* , which was used in the homelands for a small settlement, or a group of houses, with *–ham,* their own element for a village. But they appear to have just accepted **eclēs* as a local name. To the British it was an appellative, or a type of place where certain things happened, to the Anglo-Saxons a land name (James 2009: 125-130, 140-142). However, in many places in the country the spiritual aspect of a place continued to be recognised, even though the religion may have been different. Burial took place at Eccles from the mid 7th century and the designation of a place as sacred would still hold good. The continuation of the knowledge that a place was holy would help the name to continue, though its original Christian significance may have been lost, just as the word acquired a Christian significance in Roman Britain. In line with this is the fact that it was not unusual for the incoming Germanic folk to adopt a place known to have a spiritual significance (discussed further below).

Some scholars believe the word *eccles* was a loan-word into O.E., and although it has never so far been found in the written record, it does occur in the toponymic record, which is not unusual. It is never used as a generic in a bi-syllabic place-name, indicating that it was used as a toponym rather than an appellative, i.e. it was the name of a place rather than the name of a type of place (see Hough 2009: 109-111). It has also been suggested that *eccles* may be seen as a Celtic coinage, and so a survival from Brittonic which lasted into Anglo-Saxon times (Hough 2009: 109; Watts 2004: 207; Mills 2003: 172). This has implications for the question of the survival locally of Brittonic speakers into the Anglo-Saxon period.

There now follows a discussion of some other local names, which may throw light on the significance of the local area and in turn the continuation of the place-name Eccles.

Aylesford (TQ 730592)
Sweet 1896: 184; Wallenberg 1931: 286-288; Wallenberg 1934:145; Jackson 1953: 227; Smith 1956: 205-209, 215-216; Ekwall 1960: 20, 468-469; Sims-Williams 1983: 26-27; Bassett 1989: 60-61; Swanton 2000: 13; Watts 2004: 29, xlvii – xlviii; Momma and Matto 2008: 133; Cullen *et al.* 2011*: passim;* Gardiner 2012: 16-30; Coates 2017: 41-48.
A.S.C. (A) *Ægeles þrep.*
S.1211 *c*. AD 959 *Æglesforda.*
S.1212 *Agelesford.*
D.B. 1086 *Elesford*.

The earliest recording of the name of this place, *Ægælesþrep,* is in A.S.C.(A) *sub anno* 455, when it is stated that a battle took place here, between the resident population and the Germanic newcomers. It is believed that a document from Kent was acquired by copyists

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in Winchester, and that this information lies behind the Kentish annals in the A.S.C. The Winchester scribe copied the first version of the annals, in its original language, into the first version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, up to the entry for AD 891, then stopped (Swanton 2000: 13). Thus *Þrep* was written in the first transcript, and retained in later transcripts, but when A.S.C. (A2) was produced, *þrep* became –ford, perhaps in an attempt at 'improvement'. *Þrep* may have been an unfamiliar word to the Winchester scribes, but was retained until the 10th century. Modern Aylesford may, in fact, be a different place, though the two are usually taken to be the same by place-name scholars and etymologists. Nowhere else locally appears to be an earlier Aylesford, and nowhere else locally appears to derive its name from *Ægelesþrep*. An alternative explanation is that there were two place-names here, describing different aspects of the same settlement. The scribe responsible for A.S.C. (A) may have been familiar with *Æglesþrep* and used that form, which then gave rise to the Chronicle tradition. It may be that *Æglesford* became the more usual way to refer to the place locally by the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, evidenced by the fact that it is the one that has survived to this day. The A.S.C. (A2) scribe may have been aware of this and emended it accordingly (John Baker pers. comm.).

Nennius, in the *Historia Brittonum* in the early 9th century, spelled the name *Episford*, the first element signifying 'horse', with a note that in fact the name should be, in a Celtic tongue, *syddin y cenbail,* 'house of the ferry boat', presumably taken from Middle and Late Latin *caupalus* 'skiff, small, light boat' (*Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis*: 2, 454). There may well have been a ferry here: there was certainly a ferry lower down the river, from New Hythe to the opposite bank, until the mid-1950s (A.J. Prior, former resident of New Hythe, pers. comm.). However, there may also have been a ford here in this stretch of the Medway at low tide, even though it may have been too wide at other times.

The qualifying initial element Ayles-

Ekwall (1960, 20) suggests that the element *Ayles-* may be the genitive of the personal name *Ægel*. Jackson (1953: 227) refers to Ekwall's suggestion but makes no comment on it. Wallenberg (1931: 286-287) discusses the likelihood of the first element being a personal name, but suggests alternative possibilities, concluding that although a personal name here is not impossible, it is rather doubtful. Three years later Wallenberg (1934: 145), devotes almost a page to a discussion of the likelihood of a personal name, which he describes as 'not on independent record in OE', though granting that it may well have been a common personal name in O.E. before personal names were recorded. The name *Ægel* was certainly known and used on the Continent, and occurs for example, in runic form, on the lid of the early eighth-century Franks Casket, now in the British Museum. *Egil* or *Ægili* was a Germanic hero, brother of Wayland the smith, and may have been a master archer. (British Museum shelfmark 1867,0120.1). There are no known grounds for stating that the personal name *Ægel* was not used in England at this time; it may well be found in documents still to be examined.

Ekwall (1960: 20) suggests that an alternative name for Aylesford may be *Ægel's thorp,* thus referring to the name in A.S.C.(A), *Ægelesþrep*, and repeating the theory of a personal name. Watts (2004: 29), repeats the suggestion of a personal name and translates *þrep* as farm, but suggested (Watts 2004: 29) that the identification of modern Aylesford with the *Ægelesþrep* of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is 'no more than a guess'.

The second (generic) element: -ford *or* -*þrep*

The element –ford was not used in the name Aylesford before the mid-10th century. Prior to that, the generic was *–þrep,* and this has been treated as a scribal error, but an examination of the word is necessary to ascertain why it appears in the early place-name *Ægelesþrep*, before it disappeared or was replaced by modern Aylesford. Some recent entries are as follows. Sweet (1896: 184) gives *þrop, þorp, þrep* 'farm, estate, village', thus acknowledging þrep as an alternative to *þorp*. Ekwall (1960: 20) gives Aylesford as '*Ægel's* thorp', thus acknowledging the first known spelling, and discussing *þorp, þrop* as a "rare word and its meaning is doubtful", but in neither reference listing *þrep* as an alternative (Ekwall 1960: 468-469). More work has now been done on *thorp* (Cullen *et al*. 2011). Smith (1956: 205-209, 215-216) discusses at length O.E. *þrop*, O. Dan. *þorp,* O. Scand. *þorp,* describing usages, significances and derivations. He nowhere mentions the form *þrep*, and states that *þrop, þorp* are not found in Kent, as indeed is true at the time of writing. Watts (2004: xlvii-xlviii) discusses derivations and cognates, and though not including the form *þrep*, mentions other forms in –e-: O. Fris. *therp*, O. Scand. **trēb*, OW *tref-, tre-,* Corn. *tre-* O. Ir. *treb, a-treba* 'lives', Gaulish *Atrebates* 'the settled ones', I.E. **treb.* The –e- is known to continue even into some modern languages: the variant *terp,* a man-made mound, was widely used during the period of inundation of the coast of north-west Europe, and survives in modern west Frisian (retrieved from https://en.wiktionary.org/w/index.php?title=terp&oldid=49105424).

Chatham (TQ 755670)
Wallenberg 1931; 226; Wallenberg 1934: 127; Ekwall 1960: 97; Watts 2004: 127.
S.321 AD 880 æt *Cetham.*
Birch 1885: 1321 AD 975 *Cætham* (repairs to Rochester bridge).
S. 885 AD 995 *Cethæma mearc.*
D.B. 1086 *Ceteham.*

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1195→ Chatham.
O. Celt. **kaito* > Brit. **ceto* 'forest'>Pr.W. **cēd* 'wood' >Welsh *coed* +O.E. *–ham* 'settlement'.

The second, generic, element is one of the usual O.E. terms for a settlement. The first, qualifying, element is the interesting one, as a Brittonic word continuing into the O.E. place-name lexicon it indicates that the Germanic arrivals learned it from the resident British, with whom they must have spoken. They probably thought it was the name of the place, and indeed it may by this time have become just that. However, Ekwall (1960: 97; Mills 2003: 108) suggests an alternative derivation from an O.E. personal name **Ceatta,* which has never been recorded and is therefore suspicious, or an association with the words chat, chatter. This is unnecessary. A connection with the place-name Chattenden may be suggested, which is some 5km north across the river, and also Chetney Marsh, though this is some 13km to the north east. These two names, at some distance from Chatham, belie the notion of a local personal unrecorded name (Mills 2003: 108) and give more probability to the use of Brittonic **ceto* (forest).

Medway (river name)
Wallenberg 1931, *passim*; Ekwall 1960, 320; Watts 2004, 405.
This river-name is recorded in several Anglo-Saxon charters, which is not surprising as a river can form a natural boundary to a stretch of land.
Six charters mention the Medway:
S. 105 AD 764 *ad occidentalem partem fluminis Meduuuæian* (gen. sing.)
S. 37 AD 765x790 *in flumen Medeuuæge*
S. 327 AD 790 *Meodwæge*
S. 165 AD 811 *flubius Meduwege*
S. 339 AD 868 *ad flumine modico et magno Meadowege flumina*
oð Miadowegan
oð Mediwægan
fram Miadwegan
S. 321 AD 880 *Miodowæge*
oð þa ea Medewegan
S. 885 AD 995 *Medwæge*
from 1281 Medway
Thus the spelling developed through the centuries.
The elements are considered in turn.

The first (qualifying) element Med-

The first element is from Indo-European **medhu* 'middle'. Spellings with diphthongs are due to a back-mutation, or influenced by the O.E. word *me(o)du* 'mead'. This has led some scholars to suggest that the qualifying element refers to the colour of the water in the river. However, geography and common sense indicate that the significance of the first element lies in its route and its function in human terms: historically it marked the division between East and West Kent, as it still does to this day.

The second (generic) element –way

This is also found in other river-names in England, such as Wye, Wey, Wear, and on the continent such as Weser, Vistula. I.E. **wis, *weis* 'water' produces the river-name **Waisa* (Berger, D.1999. *Geographische Namen in Deutschland.* Mannheim, Duden-Verlag).

It is not unusual for English river-names to be pre-English and this is more common the further west in England one goes. The fact that river-names are frequently pre-English demonstrates that people new to an area learned the names from the resident population, and thus that there was spoken communication between the two groups. The name of the Medway shows that it was considered to be a river 'in the middle', especially where it flows between stretches of the North Downs. Rather than acting as a dividing line a river could have been perceived as joining the two banks. This might have been applicable in Roman times when the whole of Kent belonged to one civitas, though by the later 5th century the river appears to have constituted a dividing line between East and West Kent, until West Kent was annexed and the two were joined (see below pp238-239).

Rochester (TQ 740689)
Wallenberg 1931: 3; Wallenberg 1934: 123; Jackson 1953: 267; Ekwall 1960: 390; Rivet and Smith 1979: 346-348; Watts 2004: 503-504.

Rochester (Roman *Durobrivae*) is situated in an important and strategic position on the east bank of the mouth of the Medway. The site was used in the Iron Age: coin moulds were recovered in the north-east corner of the town and it is suggested that there was an Iron Age oppidum here (see above p1). Rochester was one of the sites chosen by St Augustine as an early ecclesiastical centre (A.S.C. (A) sa 604) and is named, with various spellings, in many charters and other documents. The name has undergone systematic linguistic changes, which are described most thoroughly in Rivet and Smith (1979), with a careful analysis of the various names in Watts (2004): these two sources are used here.

The first element *dŭro- 'fort, town on low ground'

This element is of Gallic and Celtic derivation and so was widely known in Gaul for a century before the Roman conquest of Britain, and also known in Britain. It is believed that the element cannot be used to signify walls, as there were no walls here before the early 3rd century (Harrison and Williams 1979: 21).

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The second element* –brivæ *"bridges"

Again, this is found in many places in Gaul, deriving from Celtic **brīu̯ā* 'bridge'. Also in Gaul the word is often in the plural, *brivæ*. The plural was used even in places where there was only one bridge, perhaps to signify that the bridge had more than one arch or stage. This gives names such as Brives in modern France, and accounts for the element *-brivae* in the Latin name for Rochester.

The element* –chester *"fortress"

This is the usual derivation in Britain from Latin *castra* 'fortress'. Some uses of the name through the centuries now follow. Not all known uses are listed here.

1. Romano-British. *Durobrivæ. Durobrivis, -brovis*, 4th century (Antonine Itinerary), first known written date 8th century (Watts 2010, 503).
2. Later Latin. *Civitas Hrofi, Hrofensis civitas* AD 731 Bede.
3. English. *Hrofæscæstræ* AD 731 Bede.
4. Combination. *Civitas Hrofibreui* AD 604 (first written 12th century) S 1. (Watts 2010, 504).

It will be seen that spellings and uses varied through the centuries, and even Bede used varied spellings within his *Historia*.

The development of the name

The loss of the first syllable *du-:*

The element *duro-* would have had the accent on the second syllable thus *durò-,* so the initial *du-* would have been dropped leaving *ro-* as the first syllable heard in the name. This is an important clue to considering communication between the resident and incoming groups (Jackson 1953: 267, referring to Ekwall 1960).

How *ro-* and *brivæ* became *Hrof-:*

The change of b+v to f: in the element *brivæ* b came together with v (they are cognate) which then became f. This would result in something like **d'rovrīw,* and as English became more widely spoken, perhaps **rofi*. Bede assumed this was the genitive of a personal name **Rofus* or **Hrofus,* and there was also an association with O.E. *hrof* 'roof'. The –s or –es after the name comes and goes and is finally dropped, the f returns to v and is finally dropped. So the whole word *Durobrivæ* became just Ro-.

Upnor (Castle) (TQ 759705)
Lewis and Short 1879: 1274; Wallenberg 1934: 116; Watts 2004: 637.
M.E. *up(pe)* 'higher' +Latin *ōra* 'gravelly beach where boats may be landed'.
O.E. *æt þæm oran* > M.E. *atten ore* >1292 *atte Nore.*

The transfer of the final –n of one word to the initial of the next is a common phenomenon, for example 1374 *Upnore*. The second element *ōra* is not common on this stretch of coast, though it is found further east in Kent, at Oar Farm (TR 225682) and at Stonar (TR 335595), which would have lain at either end of the Wantsum Channel. However, *ōra* is found in many places along the south coast of England, where it is known that trading was important in pre-Roman and Roman times, which is why the Latin word was used. Thus it can be seen that this site, on the left bank of the lower Medway, was a site of coastal trade in Romano-British times. In place-names it continued into Anglo-Saxon times with *ōrā* as generic, usually combined with other, O.E., elements as locally appropriate. This naming signifies that the use of the beaching facility was continued, at least into the 5th century, and is confirmed by archaeology at Northfleet, further up the Thames estuary (Millett 2007: 184). The element is not used for places where large vessels came into port, needing deeper water and berthing facilities. The continuation of the name *ōra* indicates spoken communication between resident and incoming people. Although the name had become established, what it signified had probably been forgotten, but the trade continued (see Hawkins 2020, where this usage is explored in more detail).

Wickham (TQ 730675)
Wallenberg 1934: 119; Ekwall 1960: 516; Watts 2004: 677; Gelling 1967: 87-103 (for the name in general).
Latin *vīcus* > O.E. *wīc* 'a certain type of place' +O.E. *hām* 'settlement'.
AD 1100 *Wycham.*
AD 1210 *Wicheham.*

Wallenberg (1934) spells the name Wicham, though in 1838 (Directory of Strood), 1844 (Strood Tithe Award Schedule) and 1891 (Census) the name is spelled Wickham.

This is an extremely important name for any assessment of the early history of the area. In the south-east part of England, east of an imaginary line drawn from Yorkshire to the Bristol Channel and then south to the coast, there are some 30 places with this name. Most of these places are close to a Roman road (see Gelling, 1967: 87-103). This has led to the understanding that instead of being the name of a place, *wīchām* was the name given by the Germanic incomers to a certain type of place which they encountered, and so an appellative, but later it would have been perceived merely as a local name. Latin *vīcus* was known and used in Old Saxony, so the fact that the word is from Latin does not, in this instance, indicate Romano-British usage, but does indicate that speakers of a nascent Old English perceived local inhabitants who were to be respected. A *vīc* was a place to be noted for a certain reason.

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It is believed that places called *wīcham* were Romano-British settlements, perhaps with some degree of local authority, which were observed and respected by the new Germanic people. Roman remains are often found in the vicinity of a *wīchām*, and so it is near Wickham on the Medway: in 1895 Roman pottery was found at Wickham Cement works and at Wickham Farm. There are several places called Wickham in Kent. It is interesting that this Kentish Wickham is on the west bank of the Medway, along from Upnor, thus two names with Latin elements lying close together.

Other local place-names and their derivation

Most of the following local names are of Old English derivation, but two show evidence of pre-migration elements (Chattenden and Comp). Notably, Chattenden is located quite close to Wickham and Upnor, both of which names have Latin elements, and Comp, though at some distance from the lower Medway, is part of a group of similar names with Latin roots (Gelling 1978: 76-78). The name Cuxton refers to a stone which was important in some way, perhaps having a religious connotation which was appreciated by incoming people. The others indicate landscape features which the incomers perceived as important in the location of their settlements. The names are listed simply to provide the evidence, but an analysis of each within the context of the landscape and in relation to known archaeological evidence may reveal further information about the Anglo-Saxon settlement process in the lower Medway.

Borstal (TQ 735668)
Wallenberg 1931: 124; Wallenberg 1934: 123; Ekwall 1960: 53.
D.B. *Borchetelle, Borcstele.*
O.E. *borg* 'security' + O.E. *steall* 'place'.

Burham (TQ 726623)
Wallenberg 1931: 305; Wallenberg 1934: 147; Ekwall 75; Watts 2004: 100.
D.B. *Borham.*
O.E. *burh* 'fort, homestead' + O.E. *ham* 'settlement' or O.E. *hamm* 'spur of land surrounded by water', here the River Medway.

Chattenden (TQ 756749)
Wallenberg 1931: 308; Wallenberg 1934: 115; Ekwall 1960: 97; Mills 2003: 108; Watts 2004: 127.
For the initial element Chat- see Chatham.
+ O.E. *–ing* + O.E. *dūn* 'hill'.

Comp, Great, Little etc (TQ 632567)
Wallenberg 1934: 147.
D.B. –
Gelling 1978: 76.
?Latin *campus* 'field' or PrW **cumm* > Mod. W. *cwm* 'valley'.

Culand (TQ 731612)
Wallenberg 1931: 361; Wallenberg 1934: 147.
1232 *de Coddeslande*; 1254 *de Codeland*; 1334 de *Codelonde*; ?O.E. *codd* "bag" i.e. high ground, or an O.E. pers. n. *Codd, Codda.*

Cuxton (TQ 709670)
Wallenberg 1931: 225; Wallenberg 1934: 113; Ekwall 1960: 137; Watts 2004: 176.
D.B. *Coclestane.*
O.E. pers. n. **Cucola,* gen sing –n + OE *stan* 'stone', 'Cucola's stone'.

Ditton (TQ 711585)
Wallenberg 1931: 306; Wallenberg 1934: 147; Watts 2004: 188.
D.B. *Dictune.*
O.E. *dīċ* 'ditch, stream' + O.E. *tūn* 'settlement'.

Frindsbury (TQ 740696)
Wallenberg 1931: 49; Wallenberg 1934: 115; Ekwall 1960: 188; Watts 2004: 241.
D.B. *Frandesberie.*
O.E. pers. n. **Freond* + OE *burh*, dat sing *byrig* 'manor, fortified place'.

Halling (TQ 703642)
Wallenberg 1931: 75; Wallenberg 1934: 116; Ekwall 1960: 212; Watts 2004: 271.
D.B. *Hallingas.*
Either O.E. *Hallingas* 'people of a man called Heall' or O.E. *heall* 'hall' or O.E. *heal* 'stone, rock'.

Holborough (TQ 703642)
Wallenberg 1931: 179; Wallenberg 1934: 116; Ekwall 1960: 212; Watts 2004: 271.
D.B. –
Birch 1885: 437 AD 841 *Holanbeorges tuun.*
O.E. *hol(a)* 'hollow' + O.E. *beorg* 'hill'.

Hoo St Werburgh (TQ 780725)**, St Mary** (TQ 803766)
Wallenberg 1931: 20, 36; Wallenberg 1934: 119, 120, 122; Ekwall 1960: 248; Watts 2004: 313.
D.B. *Hou.*
O.E. *hōh* 'spur of land'.

Hythe, New (TQ 708599)
Wallenberg 1934: 459.
O.E. *hȳþ* 'landing place'.

Larkfield (TQ 707603)
Wallenberg 1934: 148.
D.B. *Lavrochesfel.*
O.E. *lāwerce* 'lark' + O.E. *feld* 'field'.

Nashenden (TQ 731660)
Wallenberg 1931: 310; Wallenberg 1934: 126.
D.B. *Essedene* AD 995 *hyscan denes mearce.*

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O.E. **hȳscen* 'small house' + OE *denu* 'valley' or O.E. *denn* 'pasture'.

Ryarsh (TQ 670590)
Wallenberg 1934: 149; Ekwall 1960: 398; Watts 2004: 515.
D.B. *Riesce.*
O.E. *ryġ* "rye" + O.E. *ersc,* ærsce 'ploughland'.

Snodhurst Bottom (TQ 756655)
Wallenberg 1931: 145, 311; Wallenberg 1934: 28.
O.E. *snod* 'piece cut off" or as in Snodland (qv)+ O.E. *hyrst* .copse, wood.

Snodland (TQ 705615)
Wallenberg 1931: 178; Wallenberg 1934: 150; Ekwall 1960: 429; Watts 2004: 557.
D.B. *Esnoiland.*
O.E. pers. n. *Snodd(a)* +O.E. *land* 'newly cultivated land belonging to *Snodda*' or O.E. *snōd* 'twist, bend in river' from O.E. *snōd* 'head-dress'.

Strood (TQ 729690)
Wallenberg 1931: 118; Wallenberg 1934: 228; Ekwall 1960: 451; Watts 2004: 587.
O.E. *strōd* 'marshy land overgrown with brushwood'.

Wainscott (TQ 745718)
Wallenberg 1931: 230; Wallenberg 1934: 116; Watts 2004: 643.
O.E. *wægn-weg* 'cart road'; Mod. E. wain 'wagon' + *cot* 'shed'.

Walderslade (TQ 760634)
Wallenberg 1934: 128; Watts 2004: 644.
O.E. *weald* 'forest' + O.E. *slæd* 'flat valley'.

Wouldham (TQ 712641)
Wallenberg 1931: 123, 360; Wallenberg 1934: 152; Ekwall 1960: 537; Watts 2004: 703.
D.B. *Oldeham*
O.E. pers. n. **Wulda* + O.E. *hām* 'settlement' (O.E. *wuldor* 'glory'); or O.E. **wuld* < O.H.G. * *wulsta* 'bend in river'. O.H.G. **wellan* 'roll'.

Conclusion: the evidence to be gained from the place-names

It appears that a notable element of the Romano-British population continued in Kent, though it can only be estimated in what numbers and in what relationship to the incomers (Richardson 2016: 30). The investigation into the place-names of the lower Medway valley contributes important information about native survival in the area, which can be supplemented by historical knowledge and archaeological fact.

On the basis of the known archaeological evidence, the villa at Eccles was probably inhabited until the early 5th century, when coin use declined and then failed (Millett 2007: 184). The place-name itself is extremely significant, indicating the continuation not only of a name, and so of local inhabitants, but also the existence of a Christian community in late Roman times. Only the name survives to inform us that there were people in the area, and a continuation of the notion of spirituality; there is no archaeological or historical evidence for a Christian group (Millett 2007: 195). Yet it would probably have remained an attractive location, being protected by the Downs to the north and east and accessible by river and road. How long this putative Christian community continued is a matter of debate. The name is the only indication of Christianity here, but comparison with other local sites, especially Lullingstone, leads one to believe that this community may have continued to exist, and practise, into the early 5th century, and possibly beyond. Thus, it appears that the site was occupied by a Christian community, originally of Romano-British derivation, whose name, an *eccles,* was respected particularly for its spiritual significance and was important enough to have survived to the present day, in various guises and with different uses. The preservation of a local British name appears to support the British victory at *Ægelesþrep* reported in the Chronicle under the year 455, indicating that a British population continued to inhabit this part of the Medway. The accuracy of the date is not important for the present purpose; it is the fact that two opposing ethnic groups clashed in the area that is significant.

It was not unusual for the Anglo-Saxons to adopt a place that had previous spiritual associations; for example prehistoric monuments and Roman villas and mausolea were used by the incoming people as places for the burial of the dead. At Eccles it was not only the site that was reused, but the place-name itself was adopted. This may or may not indicate a continuing awareness of the religious significance of the location, perhaps it continued as local tradition, and knowledge of this tradition may well have been instrumental in the decision to establish a cemetery at Eccles in the mid 7th century. At Eccles the date of the earliest graves is later than the Anglo-Saxon graves around Rochester, for example at Chatham, indicating that Germanic people were later arrivals in the Eccles area. Thus history, archaeology and place-names supplement and support each other, bearing witness to the fact that Germanic occupation was late here, relative to other parts of East Kent, even just down-river at Rochester.

In the area on either side of the water where the wide mouth narrows to become the beginning of the river Medway, the existence of a number of pre-Germanic place-names (Figure 6.1) indicates a notable survival, and perhaps predominance, of Romano-British inhabitants. The continued use of some pre-English names or parts

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of names in this area provides information about Germanic settlement and British survival. Rochester was *Durobrivæ*, a name whose components are pre-Roman, although only the *Ro-* is kept from a pre-Roman date. Names such as Comp and the two places with *chat-* as qualifying element, i.e. Chatham and Chattenden on opposite sides of the river, are testament to a British population whose place-names were taken on by newcomers. Upnor has the Latin generic *–ōrā,* here indicating 'beach where boats can be drawn up on the shingle'. Wickham was the appellative given by the newcomers to a place where a British settlement was observed and respected. The river-name Medway was learned from the resident population, and may have been acquired by traders visiting the *ōrā* prior to the Germanic settlement. On the basis of linguistic evidence, it appears that, after the end of the Roman domination of Britain, the mouth of the Medway was not open to strangers wishing to settle. However, the place-name evidence suggests that the two groups were not mutually exclusive. Relationships between indigene and incomer may have developed around the mouth of the Medway, for example trade and exchange was carried out on the *ōrā*, while Wickham continued to be a notable place. Names do not continue unless there are people who use them, and then the names change according to the use.

This putative enclave would have come into existence after the collapse of the Roman administration, pre-dating the establishment of early Anglo-Saxon territories in both East and West Kent. But its life would have been relatively short lived, probably having been extinguished sometime during the sixth century through the expansion westwards of East Kent, which also resulted in the annexation of West Kent (Brookes and Harrington 2010: 65, 68, 71). In AD 604 Rochester became the diocesan centre of the western half of the Kingdom of Kent, so the evidence of the place-names in this corner of Kent illuminate what must have been a short-lived phase in the kingdom's development, and soon to become just another part of Kent.

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